

AGM June 2016

 selkirkbaptistchurch.org.uk/pastors-report

MID-WEEK CHURCH, THE COMMUNITY IS ALIVE!

Pastor's Report

Brian Talbot

1. AN INTRODUCTION

I have 5 wotsits I want to share in this report!

1st: I know I have a REPUTATION for loooooong winded overdue annual reports. I should live up to it!

2nd: I have a WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT from scripture which I believe the LORD is saying to us as we look to a new church year and the rest of our lives!

3rd: I have A SIMILE in mind...our church is like my first car!

4th: I have a whole bunch of DETAIL to record and celebrate...a year of things we've done together, a year out of our lives;

5th: And I have the HIGH HOPE of your attention just for the minute (or two) it takes to read my report through!

Starting with

2. THAT WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Hosea 10:12

Sow with a view to righteousness

Reap in accordance with kindness

Break up your fallow ground

For it is time to seek the Lord

Until He comes to rain righteousness on you.

I'll re-visit these words at the close! In the meantime...

3. MY OLD FIAT

Reflecting for some moments on where we are as a church (from my own perspective) my thoughts went straight to my first car...an old £100 Fiat 500!

Now don't be offended...I loved my Fiat 500 and every thought of it is a fond remembrance...

even if it frequently required a little push to start (as old cars are wont to do).

It was surprisingly heavy for such a little car and a 16yr old student.

The slightest bit of uphill was hard work...but when you got to the top of the rise, well, that weight turned out for good

and just a little downhill held a lot of promise of spinning wheels and 500cc's of engine spluttering to fullness of life...

and then we were off, me and my passengers, on our way to wherever students would want to go on a bright sunny day when life is good.

You see, our church is like my old car! Truly, a collector's item!

4. SO WHAT OF THE DETAIL?

As for the general state of the car (I mean church) we're doing pretty good. There are a good number of folk faithfully pushing, folk sharing in the driving and folk going somewhere!

THE OLD REGULAR FAITHFUL MINISTRIES...

that make Sunday's happen: the TEA & TOAST, the guys into SOUND AND TECHIE stuff, the WORSHIP leaders and bands, the children's work of FIRST STEPS and GOD'S GANG, our youth and CHOSEN, the PREACHING team including Gordon, Norman, Trevor and now Nick, REVOLUTION monthly and the services in our local RESIDENTIAL HOMES...it's all good, it happens and the Lord blesses!

And then all the mid-week ministry stuff: under COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS, the ONE-STOP SHOP, COFFEE CONNECTIONS, CRAFTERS, 1WY YOUTH, the High School CHAPLAINCY and SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES...all in gear and moving!

BUT SOME ARE WORTH A SPECIAL MENTION FOR ENDINGS AND NEW BEGINNINGS...

BORDERSMEN have met only twice this year as there seemed little appetite for a monthly programme. SWINSIDE's "boot camp" with the guys at Dave's Farm playing with guns and quads was, as always, a highlight for the guys as was a great evening at TREV BUNNING'S, when some of us travelled the length and breadth of Scotland on a smell and taste of whiskies from distilleries far and wide.

The Ladies of FRIENDS TOGETHER also met less regularly and have since decided to stand down with a view to supporting 4 church community events through the year. The first was great. It was a FUN NIGHT at Connections with board games and light entertainment.

More news: FOODBANK's church rep changed as CHRISTINE JOHNSON took on full-time employment. She handed responsibility on to others including KEITH CLELAND, JOY STEVENS and BILL ANDERSON who have joined the team.

The MONDAY INTERCESSION group have stood down. I'm so grateful for all their years of faithful unseen ministry on our behalf...thank you team...and whilst I'm looking to the Lord for more intercessors, we have seen the beginnings of a comeback for our Sunday church MINISTRY TEAM...yes please Lord!

IMPACT is also due a mention. JAN AND CHRISTINA and her team of Wednesday night volunteers, have hosted and blessed a good number of Selkirk town's youth in this past year and there are wonderful stories of conversations about God with kids that have been very open to talk and share...but this Spring term has brought with it some challenges, as a couple of groups of younger teens have quite upset residents of the town with their over-exuberant antics up and down the streets at night...and some of that on Back Row has really got a few of our neighbours hot and bothered... so much so that Jan closed IMPACT early before the close of this term to regroup and talk future strategy with the teens about the shape of things to come.

As I write, CHRISTINA has stood down from her role leading a GAMES CLUB at Selkirk High School. She is in her last days as our IMPACT YOUTH WORKER and packing for London and her home church this week. We will miss you CHRISTINA...you have been a gift to us...may God bless you in all you put your hand to in the future.

MU FOREMAN has also had to stand down from her role as a leader of JAM (Jesus and Me), the lunch time SU CLUB at Knowpark Primary School. The Lord bless you Mu... you have loved those kids.

And then, after years of service, MARGARET CAMERON has stood down from her role in CHRISTIAN AID. Margaret, thank you so much for all your investment, surely a delight to the Lord.

Whilst that's a notable list of ENDINGS above, some new BEGINNINGS are well worth a mention: ANNA at COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS has raised up a team to host a regular MORNING DROP-IN for coffee and a chat.

Another team of our church family are volunteering some Sundays to help patients at BGH downstairs to the HOSPITAL CHAPLAINCY CENTRE'S CHURCH SERVICE.

ANDY and BARBARA CARTER have led our first CAP MONEY MANAGEMENT COURSE both here at church and for teens at the High School. It's a great course. KEVIN trained up to lead it too. Meanwhile, Andy and others have made themselves available as BEFRIENDERS to CAPs new debt centre in Hawick.

Others in the congregation have on their own but been hard at work raising money for charities. HARVEY KANE volunteered service at a LEPROSY HOSPITAL in India and HARRY BARBER served at ZITHULELE HOSPITAL in South Africa. DIANE walked for CANCER RESEARCH. REBECCA and JENNY served coffee and cake for the JUNIOR DIABETES RESEARCH FUND. The GREENFIELD FAMILY staged an amazing puppet show to raise funds for COMPASSION and SUKIE and BILL BARBER have raised great sums with Sukie's Scones for the JABULANI FOUNDATION. Amazing stuff. This year, LAURA BELL helped with the BLYTHESWOOD CARE'S SHOEBOX APPEAL and our HARVEST SERVICE offering contributed to the work of BMS Missionaries in Italy amongst the refugees, JENNY CARROLL'S work with Open Air Evangelism, SOULSPAN with Borders youth and COMPASSION'S children's emergency fund.

THEN THERE HAVE BEEN THE REGULAR, NOW ALMOST TRADITIONAL EVENTS THROUGH THE YEAR

Last June's CHURCH PICNIC at Rutherford, the PHILIPHAUGH SCHOOL BBQ, HARVEST SUNDAY, the Barbers gift of CHRISTMAS LUNCH, CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT, the LIVING NATIVITY, the CROSS IN THE MARKET PLACE and Walk of Witness, The PASSOVER with Jews For Jesus, January's WEEK OF PRAYER AND FASTING, the monthly HOUSE OF PRAYER. All great events that so many of you helped make happen. Thank you so very much. God knows all you put into those events!

Worth noting was the MINISTRY FAYRE and lunch together at the start of the autumn term and also BANNERFIELD'S CHRISTMAS CAROLS: a great event but one we'll not repeat for lack of public interest... though door to door invitations resulted in some fantastic conversations.

OTHER GOOD HAPPENINGS THIS LAST YEAR...

The already mentioned FUN NIGHT social event, the GARDEN BLITZ AND BBQ at Connections hosted by the Anderson's small group, and finally, eventually, at last, the APPOINTMENT OF A YOUTH PASTOR, Daniel Sturgeon with beautiful wife and son Joanne and Matthew who expect to be settling in Selkirk mid-July...just weeks away. Thank you Lord.

And then there was JOSH BRUNNING'S amazing encounter with the Lord and subsequent baptism.

RUTH GIVEN married and NORMAN made a speech...and ELAINE AND DAVID CHADWICK married and moved with the boys to England.

And ANDY ROSS became a member, as did ADAM AND CLAIRE LYNDSAY and HAMISH CRAWFORD.

And new folk have come to worship with us: JASON and SARA ALLEN with ELIZABETH and ELLIOT; PETER and ROSEMARY GRIFFITHS and STUART MONKS and CAROL FISCHER.

And some have prayed to receive Jesus.

And CHRISTINE PETTIE has moved into town and PIOTR and KRYSTYNA have moved house locally. And LARA has settled into Selkirk.

And MYRA has retired and made herself available 24/7 to run around serving us (OK, not quite 24/7).

But see how good is our Lord!

BUT WITH THE GOOD, SOME HARD HAPPENINGS TOO...

Like railway tracks, the good and the hard threading through our lives together. We've said goodbye to the BRUNNING FAMILY as they have made HOPE there home (now that's not bad at all...but we miss them), and SOFIE has gone back home to Sweden...not bad but sad! And as mentioned, CHRISTINA leaves for London in just a little more than a week! The Lord has blessed us through these folk and we will miss them.

But some have been bereaved and our hearts go out to STUART, to MU and MATT and the girls, to KEITH and EDNA and their family, to JAMES and NIKKI and the boys and to CHRIS. And precious CHRISTOPHER has gone to be with the Lord and we grieve with the wonderful KANE family that their boy is not here but we are so glad HE IS WITH JESUS and we will one day join him. And we grieve with KENNY but we rejoice with MAY that today she is with her Father God whom she has so faithfully served and we miss BRIAN THORBURN but we are glad at any thought of our reunion when Jesus comes back.

Many in the congregation have battled with their health this year and for some that battle is still a work in progress. We think of MARGARET C and MARGARET F, CARMEL and MARION, DOREEN and IAIN. And then there was RORY's accident and God's subsequent hand in his recovery. And many others where ill health has been less public and who keep on keeping on. Then there are others who are out of work and some made redundant and some tried hard by adversity.

Thank you to the small PASTORAL CARE GROUP in touch with the congregation at home and in hospital. May Father return His loving care upon you as you so readily give yourself for others.

It is worth mentioning at this point that the DEACONS have prayed for you regularly through the year, meeting twice a month specifically to intercede on your behalf. As we launch into a new church year, the church leadership invites you to bring your concerns to us for prayer every 3rd Tuesday of the month, between 6:00 and 7:00pm at Connections. We will be there, with or without appointment...please come.

OTHER NEWS ABOUT CHURCH LEADERSHIP...

CHRISTINE PETTIE has given us another 3 years in deaconate at your request. Thank you Christine for being there always, game for anything.

As is our tradition, the deacons and myself meet weekly but particularly, at the start of the year, we spend a Friday night and Saturday engaged in working together in the Lord to discern His vision for our future. This past year saw us reviewing the matter of “process!” Just how do we do church life? Are we too busy? What about our focus? Are we moving? What of our being disciples?

As we’ve begun to address “process”, we’re still a way to go before we nail down our uppermost goals for the next five years and beyond. We are transitioning between historical mission and vision statements, seeking a simpler way forward, using concepts outlined in a book called “SIMPLE CHURCH!” You will hear us make reference to our “simple church” transitions more regularly as the year progresses, as we work toward implementing the new early in 2017. We will do our best to communicate at every stage of our own learning...so here’s the beginning!

WITH REGARD VISION STATEMENTS FROM THE PAST, it is still very much on my heart that church moves permanently into the top of the town, into a facility adequate to our needs, into the “market place” where the townspeople are so that they might trip over us (all in the nicest way of course) as that “light on a hill”. (Seriously mixed metaphors I know, but you know what I mean). And I long for the space to take every opportunity to reach the Bannerfield community through the drop in we’ve conceptualised in the past which we’ve called THE LIVING ROOM. Lord willing and all in the Lord’s time!

With a future move in mind and the need for a facility fit for purpose, ANDY and an interest group have gathered and are in conversation with a local architect to explore what might or might not be possible on the existing CONNECTIONS site. It’s a case of watch this space!

2 AGAIN...SO WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO US?

We’ve had some visiting speakers! We enjoyed a week with JOSHUA and CALEB GARCIA from the States at the beginning of this year. They sowed into the youth as well as Sunday morning church. MARTIN HAWORTH from Latin Link, JONATHAN BRUCE from Stirling, MARK FLEMING from Football Chaplaincy, CYRUS BHANDARA from CAP, JENNY CARROLL from OAP and ALLAN JONES an evangelist with a healing ministry are all among those who have brought God’s word to us, alongside our own NICK and NORMAN and GORDON and TREVOR.

And we’ve followed some themes in Sunday’s preaching: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU PRAY? PSALMS. But two themes are uppermost in my heart as that which I am hearing God saying to us loud and clear.

The first is that He would have us GROW UP INTO THE FULLNESS OF JESUS! A process that never stops but a process that does require our being INTENTIONAL about growing. God has a purpose for us all, we all share it...until His return...and that is that we grow in His likeness until we see Jesus face to face.

And essential to our growing, is that we do it TOGETHER, as A COMMUNITY...giving each other space but accountability...encouragement and direction but room to find it and make it our own...and so the theme out of the book of 1 Corinthians, THE MANY ARE ONE.

This to me, is what we're about. We're not about events or programmes or academic knowledge or social services...but we are about glorifying God in our lives.

And so I close my war and peace epistle, re-visiting my last three WOTSITS:

3 AGAIN...REFLECTING ON THE STATE OF OUR CHURCH...

I am reminded of my first car...my trustee FIAT 500!

A little used...even dated! Mine was pastel lime green. It had the sweetest character...everyone wanted a go driving it. It had a sun roof...no health and safety...a sun roof to climb up on to the back seat and hang out of travelling at 50 miles an hour...all 3 of my passengers at once. OK, so the engine was leaking water. So it was overheating. So the brakes really were dodgy but (and now for my last and fondest memory) that car could really go fast downhill, so fast that when we were headed at speed for a single track bridge, the oncoming car took the wise decision to pull over to make room for us...and we did it! We took risks, no one died and we did it...and it was so so good.

So (according to John Ortberg's book "If you want to walk on water..."), what about it? What about the many being one growing up in to the fullness of Jesus whatever it takes!!!??? What about walking on water! Will you take the risk to give God and church community life all you've got? And that, more than just 2.5 Sundays a month!

To sinful patterns of behaviour that never get confronted and changed,

To abilities and gifts that never get cultivated and deployed -

Until weeks become months

And months turn into years,

And one day you're looking back on a life of

Deep intimate gut-wrenching honest conversations you never had;

Great bold prayers you never prayed,

Exhilarating risks you never took,

Sacrificial gifts you never offered

Lives you never touched,
And you're sitting in a recliner with a shrivelled soul
And forgotten dreams,
And you realise there was a world of desperate need,
And a great God calling you to be part of something bigger than yourself –
You see the person you could have become but did not;
You never followed your calling.
You never got out of the boat!
You never walked on water!

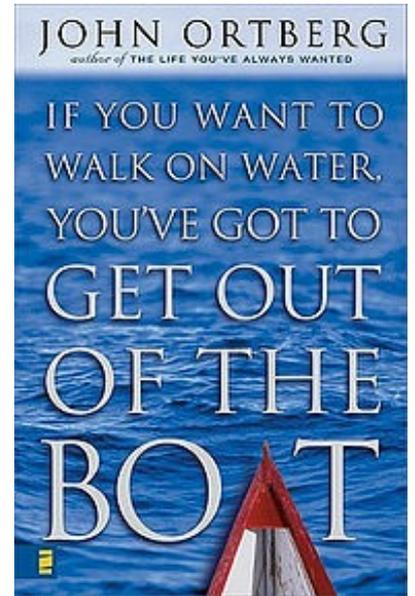
I KNOW, THE MANY OF US ARE TIRED...

We've worked hard...but so did Jesus! Ask Him what balance looked like when He was serving Father! Ask Paul what life is really for! See Hosea for a word from God!

Sow with a view to righteousness
Reap in accordance with kindness
Break up your fallow ground
For it is time to seek the Lord
Until He comes to rain righteousness on you.
Hosea 10:12

AND NOW I'LL SIGN OFF...AT LAST!



The logo for Selkirk Baptist Church features a horizontal line with silhouettes of various people on either side, including a family, a person in prayer, and a person in a long dress. The text 'Selkirk Baptist' is written in a cursive font above the word 'church', which is in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Below the line, the tagline 'connecting our neighbour to Jesus' is written in a smaller, sans-serif font.

Selkirk Baptist
church
connecting our neighbour to Jesus

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